

was to come yet. He merely nodded.

"In the first person," said Haskins. Kent gritted his teeth and the typewriter clicked steadily.

"There isn't very much to tell," she was saying. "I live here so quietly. I was born in this house, you know. My father built it; we always lived here. I have been alone a long while now, but I always stayed here. I could not leave it. You know who my father was, don't you? He was very prominent; our family is one of the oldest here."

An eagerness to talk seemed to have come upon her, yet her voice ran on in the same monotonous key.

"I did not know him until a year ago, although my father had known his family. His people, you know, are of the very best. Yes; the family is as old as ours. They were prominent, too.

"I suppose it all seems a little silly; we were both so old. Perhaps you could not call it really a courtship. We were both past that time. But he seemed to care for me, and I—I got so that I cared for him. I guess such things happen, don't they?

"We were to have been married—let me see—a month from yesterday, I think. He was coming to live here in the old house, because I could not leave that.

"After a while he stopped coming. It took me some time to understand that. I did not really understand until he wrote. But I know now, of course. At least, I think I do. We were too old, you see. I had never realized that. But I feel sure that he was right about it. It would have been a great mistake; he said so. He is even older than I, you know.

"And there would have been the money, too. He has not very much money, you know. Our families were both well to do once, but his lost a great deal. I used to feel sorry for him about that. He had position, and such a prominent name and he could go anywhere, but he had not much money. I am more fortunate than he,

yet people misunderstand about that, too. They think I am rich, and that seems so queer, because really I am not. I have the house, of course; I keep two horses. The income is just comfortable; that is, for me. Oh, I am far from being rich, and yet people keep saying that I am. Even he thought so.

"Did I tell him about it—the money?" She looked up at Kent's question, surprise in her eyes. "Why, of course—yes. That was very natural, was it not? I don't know exactly how it came up; he was talking about money, I think. I explained it to him one evening, very carefully. It was so easy to talk to him about things that would seem embarrassing; he was always so interested and kind. I remember the conversation quite well, because it was one of the last we had.

"It was a little while after that that he wrote to me. I have not seen him since then. I would not expect to, of course, after the letter.

"Would you like to see the letter?"

"Am I to read it?" he asked.

"Why, yes." She nodded childishly.

Kent studied the paper for an instant before he began to read. It had been all creased and twisted and flattened out.

Her hand went to her throat with a sudden, convulsive movement, her eyes widened and her brow wrinkled questioningly.

"Copy it?" she whispered. "I don't think I understand. Why should you copy it?"

Kent shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't know what you mean," she went on, puzzled. "Why should you copy it?"

"To use it," Kent muttered. "In the paper."

She startled him then, for she slipped from the edge of the chair with a fierce, cat-like movement, snatched the paper from his hand and sprang back, gasping. He could see fright and horror in her eyes.

"Oh!" she exclaimed,